

Message Text

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF CONSERVATIVE DC REFORM LEADER ROSSI DE MONTELERA

SUMMARY: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) DEPUTY LUIGI ROSSI DE MONTELLERA HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT HE PLANS TO VISIT WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK JUNE 25-29 FOR CONTACTS WITH GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS ACADEMIC AND MEDIA LEADERS INTERESTED IN ITALY. WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO AMBASSADOR GARDNER AND THE EMBASSY, ROSSI IS ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT ADVOCATES OF DC RENEWAL AND IS THE HEAD OF SMALL BUT ENERGETIC GROUP OF STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, REFORM-MINDED PARTY CONSERVATIVES. WE STRONGLY ENDORSE HIS REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING USEFUL APPOINTMENTS IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK. END SUMMARY.

1. WE BELIEVE THAT US INTERLOCUTORS WILL FIND ROSSI A REFRESHINGLY OUTSPOKEN, INTELLIGENT AND HIGHLY MOTIVATED YOUNG POLITICAL LEADER. HIS CAUSE IS UNABASHEDLY ANTI-COMMUNIST AND THEREFORE CONSERVATIVE BY ITALIAN POLITICAL STANDARDS. ALTHOUGH HE ASSOCIATES HIMSELF POLITICALLY WITH MILAN REFORM LEADER MASSIMO DE CAROLIS, ROSSI'S URBANE AND POLISHED STYLE HAS NOTHING OF THE VITUPERATION AND DEMAGOGUERY OF THE LATTER. HOWEVER, ROSSI SHARES DE CAROLIS ABILITY, SO RARE IN ITALIAN PARLIAMEN-
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TARIANS, OF SPEAKING FLUENT ENGLISH, A FACTOR WHICH SHOULD FACILITATE PROGRAMMING.

2. BORN IN TURIN IN 1946, ROSSI IS A MEMBER OF A NOBLE FAMILY WHICH OWNE AND OPERATES THE MARTINI E ROSSI ENTERPRISE (VERMOUTHS). EDUCATED IN LAW HE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE CONTINUED IN A BUSINESS CAREER HAD HE NOT

BEEN KIDNAPPED IN 1974. WHEN HIS FAMILY REFUSED TO PAY RANSOM, ROSSI EMERGED AS A CELEBRITY FOR HIS FEARLESS CONDUCT DURING HIS THREE-MONTH CAPTIVITY. THIS AND HIS STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST STANCE CONTRIBUTED MEASURABLY TO HIS IMPRESSIVE SUCCESS IN THE 1976 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CAMPAIGN. HIS HIGH PREFERENTIAL VOTE (SECOND AFTER DE CAROLIS COUNTRY-WIDE AND OVER THREE TIMES THAT RECEIVED BY TRADITIONAL DC PIEDMONT LEADERS SUCH AS DONAT-CATTIN AND BODRATO) WON HIM IMMEDIATE NATIONAL PROMINENCE. A POLITICAL INDEPENDENT, ROSSI LEADS A SMALL GROUP OF SOME 20 LIKED MINDED DC REFORM CONSERVATIVES WHO HAVE FORMED A "PARLIAMENTARY STUDY CENTER" TO CONCERT VIEWS AND STRATEGIES. DURING LAST WINTER'S GOVERNMENT CRISIS, ROSSI'S GROUP MADE COMMON CAUSE WITH THE SEGNI-MAZZOTTA GROUP OF 100 REFORM MODERATES. ALTHOUGH THEY CONTINUE TO SHARE MANY OF THE SAME VIEWS, THE GROUP OF 100 SEEKS TO EFFECT REFORMS BY WORKING WITHIN THE SYSTEM (GOING AFTER PARTY POSTS IN COOPERATION WITH OTHERS), WHEREAS ROSSI'S GROUP HOPES TO FORCE REFORMS BY OPERATING AS AN OPPOSITION FORCE WITHIN THE DC.

3. ROSSI PLANS JUNE 25 ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON AND IS THEREFORE AVAILABLE FOR SCHEDULING JUNE 26-27. HE WILL BE IN NEWYORK, JUNE 28-29. FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 27 ONLY, ROSSI WILL BE JOINED IN WASHINGTON BY DE CAROLIS (WHO WILL DEPART THEREAFTER FOR CANADA ON PRIVATE BUSINESS). SHOULD THERE BE NO OBJECTION, ROSSI HOPES DE CAROLIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COULD ACCOMPANY HIM ON JUNE 27 APPOINTMENTS. IN NEW YOUK, POINT OF CONTACT FOR ROSSI IS KENNETH LIPPER, SOLOMON

BROTHERS, ON NY PLAZA WHO WILL ASSIST IN NY SCHEDULING. 4. IN WASHINGTON, SUGGEST CALLS ON DEPUTY ASST. SECRETARY VINE, ROWELL AND MCKINLEY IN EUR/WE AS WELL AS ROBERT HUNTER AT NSC (WHO MET ROSSI DURING A ROME TRIP). ON THE HILL, IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL FOR ROSSI TO TEST MOOD OF CONGRESS WITH AT LEAST ON REPUBLICAN AND ONE DEMOCRATIC LEADER. SENATOR KENNEDY MET ROSSI IN ROME IN 1976 AND IF AVAILABLE MIGHT SEE HIM. SENATOR BROOKE ALSO A POSSIBILITY. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE SPOKEN DIRECTLY TO CONGRESSWOMAN FENWICK (R-NJ) WHO HAS AGREED TO SEE ROSSI (POSSIBLY WITH OTHER COLLEAGUES INTERESTED IN ITALY). IN ADDITION, WE HAVE ALSO MENTIONED PISANU VISIT TO HER. SHE IS EXPECTING MCKINLEY OR BROD TO CALL HER OFFICE DIRECTLY TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENTS FOR ROSSI AND PISANU. WE ALSO RECOMMEND THAT ROSSI SEE LEDEEN AT GEORGETOWN AND SONNNENFELDT AT JOHNS HOPKINS. A CALL ON FOREIGN EDITOR OR EDITORIAL STAFFMEMBER NEW YORK TIMES IN NY AND COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS IN ADDITION TO OTHER CALLS

DEPARTMENT MIGHT SUGGEST. PLEASE ADVISE. HOLMES

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